

**Aging and Adult Services Agency
Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan Report**
(FY2022 Appropriation Act - Public Act 87 of 2021)

March 1, 2021

Sec. 1422. (1) From the funds appropriated in part 1 for aging and adult services administration, not less than \$300,000.00 shall be allocated for the department to contract with the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan to provide the support and services necessary to increase the capability of the state's prosecutors, adult protective service system, and criminal justice system to effectively identify, investigate, and prosecute elder abuse and financial exploitation.

(2) By March 1 of the current fiscal year, the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan shall provide a report to the department on the efficacy of the contract. The department shall submit the report to the state budget office, the house and senate appropriations subcommittees on the department budget, the house and senate fiscal agencies, and the house and senate policy offices within 30 days after receipt from the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan.





PAAM ELDER JUSTICE PROJECT 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan



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PROSECUTING ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION OF MICHIGAN (PAAM) ONLINE PRESENCE

Since the beginning of the pandemic in 2020, PAAM recognized that transitioning to online training modules was essential. That work expanded significantly throughout 2021.

- This past year saw the growth of the Elder Justice forum hosted via MIPAAM.com. In addition to having access to over 1000 registered members across all forums, the Elder Justice forum in particular saw the number of registered participants increase to nearly 200 individuals, more than double of what it was at the outset of 2021. The members include prosecutors, law enforcement personnel, APS workers, and various other professions assisting in the elder justice areas. The forum has become a key medium through which information is easily distributed, trainings announced, and new decisions and laws are shared.
- The Elder Justice Project of PAAM has continued the series of six short training presentations posted on the MI-Train website. Various entries in the six-part series have been utilized by over 2000 law enforcement officers across the state according to the registered user data.
- The PAAM Elder Justice Project website has become a key resource for the public, as well as additional resources available specifically to prosecutors with a secure login id. The public resources page now contains links to the newly revamped Michigan Vulnerable Adult Teams (Mi-VAT) and Enhanced Multi-Disciplinary Teams (E-MDT) protocols, as well as various links for banks and credit unions to use in the efforts to comply with the requirements of the newly enacted Financial Exploitation Prevention Act (FEPA). PAAM in general is reworking the overall website, at which time more information will be posted on both the public and private pages relevant to investigating and prosecuting vulnerable adult abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation.
- Near the end of 2021, the Elder Justice Project purchased a year license to utilize Camtasia. This product allows us to record any online presentation, edit them, and share as we see fit. The first presentation that was recorded and edited using this software was FEPA for prosecutors, a presentation by First Assistant Attorney General Kristen Stinedurf made at an online training session organized and hosted by PAAM Elder Justice Unit. This presentation is edited and ready for posting once the new PAAM secure website is launched in early 2022.

TRAINING SUMMARY

Most of the trainings that were done in FY2021 were online. However, once vaccination rates were sufficiently high, we were able to conduct a few in-person trainings in small group settings allowing for acceptable social distancing. The largest event we held this year was the DHHS/PAAM Elder Justice Summit in July of 2021.

DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	DATE
PAAM New Prosecutor Basic Training	Zoom	May 17-20
Annual Elder Justice Summit	Zoom	July 22
Presentation at PAAM Annual Conference	Zoom	Aug. 25-27
Michigan Sheriff's Association Annual Conference	Traverse City	Oct. 18
Intro to Elder Abuse	Berrien Co.	Oct. 22
FEPA for Prosecutors	Zoom	Dec. 15

Attendee Break Down

The various online trainings were attended by a large cross-section of prosecutors, law enforcement, adult protective services workers, as well as several other interested professionals. The Sheriff's Association Conference was for elected Sheriffs, undersheriffs, and administrators from Michigan's 83 county sheriff's departments. PAAM Basic Training, as well as the PAAM Annual Conference, is for Elected Prosecutors, Chief Assistants, and Assistant Prosecutors, from around the State of Michigan, as well as those from Michigan's Office of the Attorney General. The Intro to Elder Abuse was for a group of newer assistant prosecutors in Berrien County at the request of the Chief Assistant Prosecutor.

PARTICIPATION IN THE AG'S ELDER ABUSE TASK FORCE

The Elder Justice Project continues to be an active participant in the AG's Elder Abuse Task Force. The current director, Scott Ehlfeldt, continues to serve on the task force as follows:

- ***Multi-Disciplinary Team Committee.*** This included working on the complete replacement of the Mi-VAT and E-MDT protocols and culminated with their public launch at the PAAM Elder Justice Summit on July 22. This further includes fostering the development of new teams across the state by attending team meetings and arranging mentorship with established teams in other areas of the state. Mr. Ehlfeldt has worked with several teams across the state, including those in Livingston, Kent, and Muskegon counties.
- ***Financial Exploitation Prevention Act Implementation Committee.*** Working with the task force, Mr. Ehlfeldt assisted in raising awareness and educating the community regarding the newly enacted Financial Exploitation Prevention Act. This included discussions at conferences, articles, and answering numerous technical assistance calls regarding the act upon going into effect on September 25, 2021.
- ***Law Enforcement Committee.*** This work included the production of the six-part video series regarding the investigation of financial exploitation that was posted to the Mi-TRAIN site as discussed above.
- ***Training & Education Committee.*** Continued to assist as a presenter and discussing upcoming training opportunities to educate the public.
- ***Subcommittee for Training Officers & Prosecutors (STOP).*** This group is developing a publication and associated training presentations based on fictional set of facts modeled on the Court of Appeals decision in *People v Haynes*. When complete, this will provide guidance to the investigation, charging, and prosecution of Financial Exploitation cases in Michigan. Thus far, Scott Ehlfeldt has been adapting and creating the proposed police reports, interview records, and other case-related documents. He also developing guidance sheets on the legal requirements of how a person qualifies as a vulnerable adult to be used by law enforcement and prosecutors.

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND EDUCATION

The need for community education remains a critical component of addressing vulnerable adult abuse and financial exploitation. The Elder Justice Project continues in community outreach and education as follows:

Community Events

- Attended and spoke at the Livingston County Coalition's World Elder Abuse Awareness Day event in Howell, MI. This event was marked by a proclamation from Representative Elissa Slotkin's office recognizing the day in the community.
- Presented at a community event on October 22, 2021, in St. John's, MI hosted by a local senior's group regarding current scams and schemes targeting vulnerable adults.
- Assisted in arranging a speaker for the Muskegon SafeSeniors Multi-Disciplinary Team to present at their Financial Exploitation Seminar on November 30, 2021, regarding the Financial Exploitation Prevention Act, as well as attending the event.

Published Articles

- *New Developments in Elder Justice Initiatives*, by Scott Ehlfeldt, for Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police, October 2021 issue. This article summarized the three key developments applicable to law enforcement that went into effect in 2021, focusing on the Financial Exploitation and Prevention Act, and the newly revamped Mi-VAT and E-MDT protocols.
- *The Financial Exploitation Prevention Act*, by Scott Ehlfeldt, for the Michigan Prosecutor, December 2021 issue. This article focused on the requirements of the act, and specifically addressed issues for prosecutors, including what to expect going forward.

Technical Assistance

- Field phone calls from law enforcement, adult protective services workers, and prosecutors on issues relevant to cases, including reviewing case reports.
- Hosted round table case discussions to assist in the preparation of cases for prosecution. For example, Scott Ehlfeldt participated in a case discussion with an assistant prosecutor pertaining to a charge of Criminal Sexual Conduct where the victim was a vulnerable adult suffering from dementia.

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CONCLUSION:

2021 saw many new and exciting changes, all while the COVID-19 pandemic continued to rage. PAAM looks forward to its continued partnership with MDHHS in educating the community and those dedicated to addressing the problem of vulnerable adult abuse and financial exploitation. PAAM will continue its work with the Attorney General's Elder Abuse Task Force. As we move into 2022, we are looking forward to co-hosting the National Adult Protective Services Association national conference on vulnerable adult abuse in Grand Rapids, MI. PAAM is also looking forward to resuming the "APS in Court" training series, after the training is scaled down to comply with social-distancing requirements by moving some of the educational components of the training to a virtual format while retaining the in-person courtroom experience. We are also developing online training modules for new prosecutors and officers regarding financial exploitation, as well as exploring a growing problem regarding sexual assaults of vulnerable adults.



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